



MEETING SUMMARY

January 24, 2003

A *regular public meeting* of the New Jersey State Interagency Coordinating Council was held on Friday, January 24, 2003, at the Medical Society of New Jersey headquarters in Lawrenceville, New Jersey. The meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m. by William Agress, Chair, who presided and declared a quorum present.

ATTENDANCE – Attachment #1

WELCOME/PRESIDENT'S REPORT – William Agress

1. The Chair welcomed *new member Florence Nelson, Ph.D.*, who replaced Deborah Spitalnik as personnel representative. Dr. Nelson gave a brief sketch of her background and identification with early intervention. New parent member *Patrick Fay* reported to the Governor and to the Chair that he could not serve on the Council. At the request of the Chair, Council members and public members identified themselves and their connection with early intervention.
2. The Chair made reference to the *summary of correspondence since the 11/22/02 meeting* (attached to the agenda). He also called attention to the new *SICC meetings calendar*, which was distributed today (attached to file copy of agenda).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The *minutes of the November 22, 2003 meeting* were unanimously approved as distributed – upon motion by Ms. Spiotta, seconded by Ms. Lotze and carried.

SICC COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. **Family Support** – Lauren Agoratus and Joseph Holahan, Co-Chairs

Ms. Agoratus reported for the *committee, which met earlier today (Attachment #2)*.

SICC COMMITTEE REPORTS (continued)

2. Systems Definition/Communication – Toni Spiotta, Chair

Ms. Spiotta reported for her committee, which met earlier today. They are working on *identification of information/materials/reference sources that Council members need in the performance of their duties, including a resource map of websites*. These resources will be broadened for outreach in other areas. In *discussing systems definition*, the committee agreed on the need for better understanding of intent within the early intervention system before broadening relationships outside the system.

The committee has developed a *questionnaire for SICC members* to elicit bio information and arranged for a photographer to attend the next SICC meeting to take individual photos.

Ms. Spiotta expressed concern with what she deemed “*duplication activity*” and “*overlap*” in the work of SICC committees. She will set up a meeting with the SICC Chair and committee chairs to discuss her personal concerns.

3. Interagency – Rose Annussek, Chair

Ms. Annussek summarized the highlights of her *committee meetings on November 22, 2002 and January 7, 2003 (Attachment #3)*, with a revision, as indicated, in NJ Developmental Disabilities Council activities. She briefly highlighted the *committee’s joint meeting this morning* with the Family Support Committee.

4. Administration – Jennifer DeMauro, Chair

Ms. DeMauro reported on the *1/6/03 committee meeting*. Susan Richmond reported on *items assigned to the Administrative Committee* at the 10/29/02 meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on SICC/REIC Systems Study.

The *SICC developed Annual Report* is on target, and copies will be distributed to the Council at its March 28th meeting. This report will be in addition to the Federally required Annual Performance Report prepared by DHSS.

Because of time constraints, it is not possible to follow all the *budget flow chart time-lines this year*. Rather than have no input this year, the committee is working with what is possible, with the aim of completing the process in the next budget cycle. Meanwhile, the committee *drafted a proposed SICC “position statement”* (attached to file copy of minutes) that was distributed for Council discussion/input. The statement will be finalized when information, not available at this time, can be supplied by the Lead Agency.

The Council authorized the SICC Chair, working with the Administrative Committee, to use this statement (in its final form) as the basis of testimony before the New Jersey legislative committees and with other entities in behalf the early intervention process – upon motion by Ms. Annussek, seconded by Ms. DeMauro and unanimously carried

LEAD AGENCY – Department of Health and Senior Services

Celeste Andriot Wood, Assistant Commissioner, and Terry Harrison, Part C Coordinator

Dr. DiFerdinando sent regrets that family illness prevented his attendance at today's meeting. In his absence, Ms. Wood outlined the system changes that are under way in early intervention and other relevant issues:

- ★ Budget crisis/Governor request that *departments provide 5-15% budget reduction*. The Lead Agency has *not submitted budget cuts in early intervention*; it remains a department priority.
- ★ Current figures will not accommodate early intervention growth and its financial impact.
- ★ Completion of *Time and Cost Study*, to be implemented this year; RFP for centralized billing system, which will provide an infrastructure for consistent billing/collection and timely distribution of funds.
- ★ Looking at *fee-for-service system*; outlined potential advantages.
- ★ Meeting with legislators and insurance representatives to pursue insurance coverage for early *intervention services*; Medicaid reimbursement; cost-sharing with families.
- ★ Cost effectiveness of "*letters of agreement*" with entities that have access to multiple professionals available for use by early intervention system through service coordinators when providers of choice may not have full range of services necessary.
- ★ Eagerness to *maintain relationships with current providers* that can render necessary services.
- ★ *Systems changes to come out in writing*; nothing to be implemented without a period of appropriate comment; regional information sessions planned.
- ★ Representatives of *Governor's Office to meet with SICC Chair and SICC committee chairs* to discuss changes in early intervention policies.
- ★ *Question-and-answer exchange* with those present.

Ms. Wood introduced newly appointed *Procedural Safeguard Coordinator Beverly Rivell*; distributed an announcement outlining her credentials (attached to file copy of minutes).

Ms. Harrison highlighted information as follows:

- ★ A *Procedural Safeguards stakeholder meeting* was held on 1/23/03 to review and receive comments on revisions to DHSS guidelines and forms, Family Rights Booklet and training process and curriculum. A second meeting to finalize the review is scheduled for March.
- ★ *Family Handbook* is close to being ready for printing and then distribution. However, the handbook will always be a "work in progress."
- ★ A *Child Find Meeting* is scheduled for 1/29/03. The meeting is a collaboration between the Departments of Education and Health and Senior Services to identify underserved populations in each of the four regions and develop a plan to target Child Find efforts at the community level and with community resources and supports. The *National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center* is facilitating the meeting and providing technical assistance and support.

- ★ *Part C Steering Committee* is scheduled to meet 2/14/03 at East Brunswick Library. A mailing will be sent to all SICC and Steering Committee members.

LEAD AGENCY (continued)

- ★ *Part C Improvement Plan* submitted to the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, has moved from Sheryl Parkhurst, New Jersey's Project Officer, to next level of review.
- ★ *Annual Performance Report* is on hold pending changes proposed by the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. A conference call is scheduled for 1/27/03 to review the draft format and requirements.
- ★ *The Federal child count* of eligible children receiving IFSP services on December 1 being collected by the REICs will be submitted to DHSS by the end of January and reported to the SICC at the March 28th meeting.

REIC UPDATES

Cynthia Newman discussed the *December 1 count* (federally mandated) and its significance in counting and profiling children served on an annual basis. She reported estimated growth in the four regions: Southern, 8%; Family Link, 8%; Mid-Jersey Cares, 10%; Northeast, 15%.

INTERAGENCY UPDATES – No reports

OLD BUSINESS

The Chair reviewed the following *SICC action priorities* adopted by the Ad Hoc Committee on REIC/SICC Systems Study at its 10/29/02 meeting:

1. *SICC and REIC executive boards meet once a year to communicate more effectively* in identifying each others roles, exchanging information/ideas, expertise/experiences. **The four REIC directors are currently working on the details of such a meeting.**
2. Have a board member from each REIC officially appointed as a full SICC member. **Lead Agency has under study.**
3. Have an *SICC brainstorming session annually for exchange of ideas* not related to “system structure”; possibly as a retreat or part of a retreat. **The Chair has under study.**

NEW BUSINESS

1. The Chair discussed the merits of sponsoring a “*New Jersey Early Intervention Week*”. The Council approved the idea, and authorized the Chair to pursue the issue.

2. The Chair reported the details of the *National Leadership Project* (May 28-June 1) and encouraged parent-members who are interested to contact him.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lowell Arye reported that the NJDHSS website is not current with SICC minutes, committee members, SICC members, meeting dates -- and stressed the importance of their being updated on a regular basis.

ADJOURNMENT – 1:15 p.m.

APPROVED
3/28/03